[](http://www.google.com.au/imgres?q=grandparents&safe=active&hl=en&biw=1366&bih=673&tbm=isch&tbnid=BwBDWmEG5L3A4M:&imgrefurl=http://yaymicro.com/stock-image/grandparents-having-a-picnic-with-grandchildren/526957&docid=8-LspyfufFNF-M&imgurl=http://image.yaymicro.com/rz_1210x1210/0/25f/grandparents-having-a-picnic-with-grandchildren-25f767.jpg&w=1210&h=807&ei=BUkeU6LSA4ualQXetIHwBA&zoom=1&ved=0CIQCEIQcMDk&iact=rc&dur=13797&page=3&start=41&ndsp=23)**Oral History Project: Continuity and Change**

You are to interview an older member of our community and write a biography about their fascinating life to date.

**Phase 1: Developing the Questions**

*A great biography is driven by great questions.* In preparing for your interview, you will need to develop a series of questions that will encourage interesting responses. Think about what you would like to know about the person, and what parts of their life you want to write most about. Some questions you might want to think about include: What events shaped or changed this person’s life? Did he or she overcome any obstacles? Take risks? Get Lucky? What was life like growing up?

How life stays the same is as interesting as how life changes. What were the main changes that they experienced over time? How did the person you interviewed respond and cope with these changes? Refer to the twentieth century timeline and develop some questions that are directly related to significant events that the person may have experienced in their life. E.g. What do your remember about World War 2? What impact did the war have on your life?

Aspects of the past that remain the same over time are referred to as continuity. Find out what have the

constants been in this persons’ life and how important these have been.

**Phase 2: The Interview**

Check over your questions prior to the interview and decide where you will record your information. Aim to write down the key points. When interviewing, remember to let your interviewee finish their answer before asking the next question. Be an active, interested listener and be prepared to ask for clarification or for more detail.

**Phase 3: Putting It All Together**

It’s now time to synthesise your information. Synthesizing is like moving puzzle pieces about until a picture emerges. Instead of cardboard pieces, you are moving ideas and facts. Have you been sorting your findings so they are lined up under the questions you posed at the beginning? What information can be ‘culled’?   
Which information has potential?

**Stage 4: Writing the Biography: Telling the Life Story**

Your task is to take the information and insights from your interview and synthesis – blend them together into a series of well-crafted paragraphs which tell important stories.

**Structuring a Biography** Luckily, starting a biography is easy. The first paragraph should introduce the person. Create a summary of who this person is and an overview of their life. You shouldn't get into specifics yet; save that for the body. In the body paragraphs, you should trace life from birth, childhood and adulthood. If you're writing about someone who's still young, simply work in chronological order from birth up to the present day. The biography should conclude with a short summary of the person's life, similar to the introduction, but instead of setting up who the person is, it should reinforce what the person accomplished. When you have completed your biography, create a title that will engage the reader.

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|  | **Accomplished** | **Capable** | **Developing** | **Beginning** |
| Planning | A clear plan is provided which demonstrates the ability to select, organise and develop key ideas. | A detailed outline is provided which demonstrates the ability to organise ideas in response to the task. | The writer is beginning to use strategies to plan a piece of writing in response to a task | Evidence of planning was not submitted. |
| Ideas and Content | The writing engages the reader through the use of characters, setting and plot with only occasional lapses. Lively, interesting and memorable writing which engages the reader. Ideas are well supported with detail | The writing develops the narrative effectively and is of an appropriate length and follows a recognisable structure: beginning, middle, end. | The writing attempts to develop the main characters, setting and plot. It follows a recognisable structure but might be too long or too short. | The narrative includes some mention of the main character, setting and plot. However there is insufficient detail. |
| **Mechanics of language** | Spelling and punctuation errors are identified and corrected using a range of approaches. | Spelling and punctuation errors are identified and corrected consistently using a range of approaches. | Most basic spelling and punctuation errors are identified and corrected accurately. | Some basic spelling and punctuation errors are identified and an attempt is made to correct them accurately. |
| **Expression** | When creating and editing, has demonstrated an understanding of grammar, using a variety of more specialised vocabulary. Sentence structure and vocabulary are addressed to take context, purpose and audience into account. | Demonstrates the ability to write for selected purposes. Sentence structure and vocabulary are addressed to take context, purpose and audience into account. | With some guidance, sentence structure and vocabulary are addressed to take context, purpose and audience into account | Simple sentence structure and vocabulary are used to convey meaning. |

**Biographical Writing Rubric Student Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Comments** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Interview Question Sheet.**  Allow each person to ask a question and appoint 2 scribes to write out the answers to each question. | |
| 1. **Fact finding.**   Person’s name  When and where they were born  Family background |  |
| 1. **Childhood memories** |  |
|  |  |
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**Continuity and change over time**



How life stays the same is as interesting as how

life changes. Aspects of the past that remain the same over time are referred to as **continuity.**

Organisations, ideas and some problems can endure for very long periods of time.

The 20th century also saw a major shift in the way people lived, as a result of changes in politics, ideology, economics, society, culture, science, technology, and medicine. It

has been theorized that the 20th century saw more technological and scientific

progress than all the other centuries combined since the dawn of civilization.

1. Beginning from birth, create a chronology of events experienced by the person who you interviewed.
2. What were the main changes that they experienced over time? How did the person you interviewed respond and cope with these changes?

**Introducing Historical Perspective**

1. Select one significant event that your resident has experienced during their life such as the Great Depression or a World War. Write a short paragraph outlining their experience.
2. *An individuals’ experience of an event will provide a different perspective or point of view.*

*Here is an example:*

*Elsie was from a wealthy family and during the Great Depression, there were daily knocks on the back door from men who were ….*

*Harold doesn’t remember his father as a child but recalls his mother telling him that he was ‘on the road’ looking for work that would eventually pay…*

Based on the event that you wrote about in the previous question, consider how another person may view the event differently based upon their experience. Some examples of people who are likely to have different perspective include a reporter, a politician, a male or a female, educated or unskilled worker or a migrant.